



SJR 22 Joint Subcommittee on Health Care and Health Insurance

PO BOX 201706
Helena, MT 59620-1706
(406) 444-3064
FAX (406) 444-3036

57th Montana Legislature

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November 19, 2001

TO: Members of the SJR 22 Subcommittee on Health Care and Health Insurance
FROM: Gordy Higgins, Legislative Services Division
RE: November 29 meeting

Reminder: The SJR 22 Subcommittee will meet at 9:30 a.m., Thursday, November 29, 2001, in Room 137 of the State Capitol.

This month's meeting will closely track the proposed agenda presented at the October meeting. The highlights include a presentation from Dr. Tim Stratton from the UM School of Pharmacy and a legal analysis of the recent decision declaring the MaineRX prescription drug benefit program constitutional.

You'll recall that several members requested information on the current status of the Medicaid program and budget. The Department of Public Health and Human Services is meeting this month to determine a course of action related to cost-containment strategies and should be able to provide some important initial information to the Subcommittee on what the next Legislature might expect in this arena.

Also, there is an agenda item addressing Federal actions affecting the work of the Subcommittee. The depth of the information I'll be able to provide hinges on whether Congress adjourns prior to the meeting date. However, I will provide a brief analysis of the major economic stimulus bills in the form they are in as of the meeting date. We may have to wait until the scheduled February meeting to have a complete understanding of the impacts.

Finally, Bonnie Adey, the state's Mental Health Ombudsman has provided the required annual report, and will speak briefly to the issue of access to mental health services and the effect access has on the Subcommittee's work; Chuck Butler will present information on the Montana Comprehensive Health Association, the state's high-risk insurance pool; and Claudia Clifford will recount the recent efforts of the Insurance Commissioner as he travels the state holding roundtable discussions.

I've enclosed the Annual Report of the Mental Health Ombudsman, an article from Jim Edwards from Western States Insurance on purchasing pools, and a copy of a recent interview featuring State Auditor John Morrison.

Feel free to contact me at 444-9280, or by e-mail at gohiggins@mt.gov if you have any questions. I look forward to seeing you at the end of the month.

Enc. October meeting minutes
 Meeting Agenda
 Purchasing pool article
 John Morrison interview
 Mental Health Annual Report for Economic Affairs members. (Finance Committee members and Children and Families Committee members should have been given a copy by their respective Committee staff)

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